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STATE OF UTAH
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From Adversity Comes Strength, From Strength Comes Success

*2013 Inaugural Address
Utah Governor Gary R. Herbert
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My fellow Utahns, it's indeed an honor to be here with you today. I would like to express my appreciation to the musical performers and to all the program's participants. I also extend my appreciation to our Master of Ceremonies, General Jefferson S. Burton and his troops. We thank the dedicated soldiers and the airmen and women of our Utah National Guard for their service, not only on this day, but for the service and for the sacrifice they offer every single day on our behalf. I also recognize and thank the numerous civic, religious, legislative, and community leaders present here.

I'd like to particularly acknowledge the presence of Attorney General John Swallow, State Treasurer Richard Ellis, State Auditor John Dougall, Senate President Wayne Niederhauser, House Speaker Rebecca Lockhart, Chief Justice Matthew B. Durrant, Senators Orrin Hatch and Mike Lee, and Congressmen Jim Matheson, Jason Chaffetz, and Chris Stewart. Also I'm pleased to say that joining us are former Governors Norm Bangerter, Olene Walker, and Jon Huntsman Junior. I also recognize the presence of former First Lady Norma Matheson.

Let me also take a moment to say that it is indeed a privilege to serve alongside a great statesman, my good friend and colleague, Lt. Governor Greg Bell. I am grateful for the sacrifice both he and his wonderful wife JoLynn offer daily as they serve this state and its people. And before I go on, let me also express my love and appreciation for the first lady of our state, the first lady of my life, my great wife Jeanette. She not only keeps me grounded; she keeps me going. She is my motivation and my inspiration.

Today I placed my hand on sacred scripture, and pledged to serve this state and its people to the best of my ability. I am keenly aware that this is a historic time. We are confronted by decisions that will set our course for generations to come. More importantly, I

understand how these decisions will affect the people around this state, and I take that responsibility seriously. As I travel around the state and have the opportunity to meet with you and others to discuss the challenges you face each and every day – I want you to know that it strikes me in a deeply profound and personal way. Although our circumstances have changed over the past 150 years, the strength, the character, and the very fiber of Utahns have largely remained the same. The resilience, the determination, that same pioneer spirit, that same strong will in the face of adversity, that same “can-do” attitude, is just as evident in 2013 as it was in 1847.

For example, during the wildfires that plagued us last summer, the Wood Hollow Fire broke out in central Utah. The fire spread quickly and soon surrounded homes and cabins in the foothills near Indianola. Law enforcement and volunteers went house-to-house alerting neighbors to evacuate immediately. Two of those volunteers were Dave and Janice Taylor. While Dave and Janice were assisting others, tragically their own home went up in flames. I met with them just a few hours after that devastating loss. Dave and Janice told me that, although they lost their home and all their possessions, they still had each other, they had their family, they had their faith, and they would find a way to carry on. Their courage inspired me.

A few days later, I learned that the wind had kicked up again, and the flames were raging, and the town of Fairview was being evacuated. I immediately drove south to coordinate with local officials. When I arrived at the fire station in Fairview, I was surprised to find Dave Taylor there helping to coordinate evacuation efforts. I then noticed his wife Janice helping serve dinner to the fire fighters. I gave the Taylors a quick hug and asked them how they were doing. To my surprise they replied, without any hesitation, that all things considered, they were fine, but that others might not be, and they were there to help. The Taylors and other families like them are heroes of our state. People who care more about others than they do about themselves, they make this state great.

The people of Utah are no strangers to adversity, and our history proves that we are no strangers to accomplishment. One of the most inspiring events in Utah history is the story of the Hole in the Rock Pioneers. In November of 1879, 236 men, women, and children answered the call of their leaders to leave their homes in Iron County and colonize the remote San Juan area of southeastern Utah. This dedicated group traveled for two weeks across rugged terrain until they reached the edge of the mighty Glen Canyon. Nearly straight down, more than 1,200 feet below the canyon rim, was the Colorado River.

The pioneers had reached a seemingly impassable obstacle. The passage to the river was rough and narrow and very steep. Huge boulders blocked the way. Their supplies were limited. Winter conditions had set in and yet the group persevered. For six weeks the men crafted a trail down that sandstone cliff. They blasted away boulders and chiseled rock and created a trail on which the wagons could travel. Near the bottom of this route, when the grade became too steep for the wagons, the men drilled holes into the stone wall of the canyon every two feet and pounded in oak stakes. They then covered those stakes with branches, and brush, and gravel.

This created a primitive, yet a passable road. It took ten to twenty men, and even some horses, to hold each wagon and keep it from plummeting out of control while navigating this very challenging route. Yet, this improvised trail proved sturdy enough to support the pioneers and their eighty wagons and they were able to slowly move down that ravine.

When they reached the bottom of the trail and stood on the shores of the mighty river, the pioneers kept working and overcame their next great challenge: moving each of their wagons, and 1,000 cows, and getting their families safely across the 300-foot-wide Colorado River. I've been there, and as I've stood on the edge of that canyon and looked at that route. I could only imagine what each mother and father must have felt as they guided their families and all their possessions down that very steep and very treacherous trail.

I know that many of us have had similar feelings of concern for our families as we watched our nation's economy careen out of control, and perch precariously on the edge of collapse. Just as steady hands and strong hearts, we're needed to carefully guide those wagons down the west wall of the Glen Canyon. Principled leadership and hard work with everyone's participation, was needed to guide Utah through the worst economy since the Great Depression. But when we reached the bottom of the recession and our economy stabilized, the journey was not yet finished. Just as that weary, yet tenacious group of settlers faced a harrowing path back up and out of the other side of the canyon, our State too faced a steep and difficult economic route upward. We accepted that challenge, and we made that climb, one determined step at a time.

In times of great strife and difficulty, when our course is steep and we are weary, it may be tempting to take a shortcut, to postpone difficult decisions, to abandon our commitment to principle in favor of political expediency. But as I was taught by my parents, principles are not relative. Whether you are a contractor like my father, or a teacher, or a small business owner, or a doctor, or a farmer; for a family or for the government, principles always hold true. And true principles are the surest foothold for good governance.

In Utah we honor the principle of individual liberty coupled with individual responsibility the power of people to work, to produce, to innovate, to be self-sufficient, and to be rewarded for their efforts. We understand that the most powerful engine for prosperity in the history of the world is the private sector operating in a free market system. We believe in the principle that we achieve the best outcomes when everyone is engaged, and if we all participate with a sense of unity towards our goals, we will have a greater chance for success.

I want you to know that I am unwavering in my commitment to ensure that we are all a part of Utah's success. We all know that the correct path is often not the easy path. This has been true both today and in years past. When the Hole in the Rock party crossed the great Colorado River and began the ascent up the canyon's other side, when their muscles ached and their resources were low, they could see that the path ahead still remained difficult.

For many Utahns today, the path ahead remains difficult and challenging. Like the pioneers, I recognize that we still have a ways to go. To each of you I say, have courage! Have faith! There is reason to be optimistic. Utah's economy is recovering, and is growing once again. We are making progress, and we will reach our destination. We are stronger because of our difficult climb because from adversity comes strength, and from strength comes success.

Now the heroes of our Hole in the Rock story made it out of that rugged canyon. Their success had less to do with their tools, and their cattle, and their wagons; and more to do with their character. These people went on to tame the rough San Juan region. They built schools, they planted crops, they established businesses and communities, and they raised families. We remember them, we honor them, not only for their legacy and accomplishment, but especially for their character. That same character is ingrained in the people of Utah today. It is who we are.

I remember about two years ago shortly before my mother passed away, when I was visiting with her, she looked at me and said, "Gary, do you ever just pinch yourself when you think that you are the Governor of our State?" I said to my mom, "Yes, I do!" And then she said, like any proud mother, "You know, I pinch myself, also." She realized what an honor it is to serve as the Governor of this great state. She also realized that she lived in a country and a state where anyone's little boy or little girl can grow up to become the Governor.

It is truly an honor to be your Governor. It's a humbling opportunity. I wish that you could all see what I see, and feel what I feel as I travel around this state and meet with so many great and wonderful people. I see people and families who face their own unique challenges with courage and determination, showing charity and compassion for neighbors, and a steely-eyed commitment to move forward. Whether you're an 8th generation Utahn, or new to the Beehive State, we all stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before us and we should all strive to make things better for those who come after us.

I love this state and I love its people. We can be and are becoming a great example to the rest of this country of good governance and quality communities. I believe Utah's best days are still ahead of us! May God bless us all in this effort, may God bless this nation, and may God continue to bless the Great State of Utah.